(b) if so, whether Government are considering any proposal to appoint a commission to study the status of land reforms over the period, in terms of advantages to dalits; and

(c) if not, whether Government would consider this suggestion in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) Land and its management falls within the jurisdiction of State Governments. However, State Governments have been requested from time to time for distribution of ceiling surplus land, Government wasteland and Bhoodan land to the eligible rural poor, including dalits. As per the information received from State Governments on implementation of land ceiling laws, an area of 50.34 lakh acres has been distributed to 54.05 lakh beneficiaries, of which 39% belong to Scheduled Castes and 16% to Scheduled Tribes.

There is no proposal under consideration to appoint a Commission to study the status of land reforms.

Employment of physically challenged persons

2264. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any policy to give preference to physically challenged persons in employment;

(b) whether there is any policy to give certain percentage, reserved for such persons, in the matters of services, including judicial services;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the future policy in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. There is a provision of 3% reservation of vacancies in the Government establishments for persons with disabilities in identified posts. The posts of Judges, Magistrates in Lower Judiciary are identified as suitable for persons with disabilities and therefore, reservation is available against the vacancies of these posts.

Special education centres for mentally handicapped

2265. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the names of States/UTs having large number of mentally handicapped persons;

(b) the places where NIMH Model Special Education Centres have been located, to cater to their needs;

(c) whether these centres are sufficient to meet the requirements of all the mentally handicapped persons in the country; and

(d) if not, what Government propose to do to provide more such Centres?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) States of Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa and Gujarat have large number of persons with mental disabilities.

(b) NIMH has three Regional Centres located at Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai, and two Model Special Education Centres at New Delhi and Secunderabad.

(c) and (d) Besides Model Special Education Centres of NIMH, about 1025 special schools are run by Non-Governmental Organisations.

Manual scavenging

2266. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry was directed by the Hon'ble Prime Minister to prepare the status notes on its programmes regarding conversion of dry latrines and the liberation of manual scavengers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is the total number of manual scavengers as on 1st January, 2007; and

(d) by when the inhuman system of manual scavenging would be abolished?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) In compliance of the directions of Hon'ble Prime Minister, a status note on Liberation and Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers was submitted by the Ministry in October, 2006.

(c) and (d) The continuance and construction of dry latrines and employment of manual scavengers is prohibited under the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993. However, for rehabilitation of erstwhile manual scavengers and their dependents in alternative occupations, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has launched a new Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers. As per reports received from State Governments/UT Administrations, there were 3.42 lakh erstwhile manual scavengers and their dependents, to be rehabilitated, at the time of formulation of the scheme.

De-addiction centres

2267. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of de-addiction centres in the country, State-wise;

(b) the capacity to house drug addicts in those centres, centre-wise; and